

Comparative analysis of Estero Fire Rescue Company Officer
and Firefighter performance evaluations relative to reward,
promotion, corrective and disciplinary action.

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CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

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Abstract

The problem was that Estero Fire Rescue (EFR) was using employee performance evaluations (EPE) which did not have specified rewards or consequences. There was uncertainty if this omission minimized the effectiveness of the EPE process. The purpose of this research was to provide insight into current trends of other agency EPE's and understand EFR employee perception about adding reward or consequence to EPE's. The research questions were (a) how do firefighter (FF) and company officer (CO) performance evaluations in other fire and emergency medical service (EMS) departments compare to those of EFR in terms of reward to the employee being evaluated? (b) How do FF and CO EPE's in other fire and EMS departments compare with those of EFR for promotional decision-making? How do FF and CO EPE's in other fire and EMS departments compare with those of EFR in defining corrective or disciplinary action procedures for poor performance ratings? (d) Do the EFR FF's and CO's think that an EPE system which defines reward and consequence will increase the effectiveness of the performance evaluation process? The research method was descriptive. The research described trends and compared agencies in utilizing EPE ratings for promotional decision-making, punitive discipline, corrective action and/or

reward; as well as indicated whether EFR FF's and CO's believe that criteria will improve the evaluations effectiveness. Results indicated EFR FF's and CO's were divided about utilizing reward for EPE ratings and were clearly against punitive discipline; yet believed the use of corrective action and promotional opportunity can increase EPE effectiveness. Agencies lack specific criteria defining the use of reward or consequence. Recommendations include giving clear specific written criterion for administering reward and consequence, training, and streamlining the process along with a change in focus to improve regular feedback will be needed to improve EPE effectiveness.

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Introduction

Employees are the most important resource necessary to meet the mission of the EFR district. Proportionately the employees are also the most costly resource to hire, and maintain. Financial challenges along with other obstacles increase the demand of accountability for the productivity of this human resource.

Historically employee performance evaluations have been used to manage productivity of employees in the workplace. "Performance Management began around 60 years ago as a source of income justification and was used to determine an employees wage based on performance (People Streme Human Capital Managment, 2008)." Archer North (2007), states:

Performance appraisal systems began as simple methods of income justification. That is, appraisal was used to decide whether or not the salary or wage of an individual employee was justified. (§6)

Little consideration, if any, was given to the developmental possibilities of appraisal. It was felt that a cut in pay, or a rise, should provide the only required impetus for an employee to either improve or continue to perform well. (§8)

Sometimes this basic system succeeded in getting the results that were intended; but more often than not, it failed. (¶9)

EFR supervisors perform annual appraisals of employee performance as part of human resource management. The problem is that Estero Fire Rescue (EFR) is using employee performance evaluations (EPE), which do not have specified rewards and/or consequences. There is uncertainty if this omission or missing feature minimizes the effectiveness of the evaluation process. The purpose of this research is to provide insight into current fire and EMS agency trends, in addition to EFR employee perception about the effectiveness of adding reward or consequence to EPE's. The research method is descriptive in nature. The research questions are (a) how do firefighter, (FF) and company officer, (CO) EPE's in other fire and emergency medical service (EMS) departments compare to those of EFR in terms of reward to the employee being evaluated? (b) How do FF and CO EPE's in other fire and EMS departments compare with those of EFR in determining whether an employee is chosen for promotion during promotional processes? (c) How do FF and CO EPE's in other Fire and EMS Departments compare with those of EFR in defining corrective or disciplinary action procedures for poor performance ratings? (d) Do the EFR FF's and CO's

think that an EPE system which clearly defines reward and consequence will increase the effectiveness of the performance evaluation process?

Background and Significance

The global economic crisis has hit hard during the last several years and the community of Estero has not been immune. By legislative charter EFR is an independent special taxing district of the State of Florida; providing emergency and non-emergency services such as fire and EMS to the public. EFR is governed by a citizen elected board of five fire commissioners. The EFR department is funded primarily from property tax revenue. Recent property tax reform within the State of Florida accompanied with the global financial crisis has created challenges for the department budget and resources.

Citizens are demanding greater accountability and productivity. EFR is subject to increasing scrutiny as a government organization to be fiscally responsible and do more with less. Citizens are taking a more active role in questioning the performance of government services. The United States Fire Administration, (USFA) goals include an objective "to respond appropriately in a timely manner to emerging issues" (USFA National Fire Academy, 2005, p. 3). This increase in activism places greater pressure on

organizations to not only perform at a higher level but to also provide concrete documentation of greater productivity for every penny spent. Leaders at all levels of organizations are tasked with appraising the performance of members and helping lead employees to develop to a higher level.

The greatest resource enabling the operations field division to achieve its mission is a uniformed strength of 45 operational field FF's and CO's; cross trained in emergency medical services, (EMS). Estero Fire Rescue operations personnel must work cooperatively with those within as well as outside of the agency to serve the citizens needs. Automatic aid is common with surrounding districts and municipalities. Mutual aid agreements are actively participated in with other local, county, state and federal agencies. Operational field personnel are the first line of response to citizen calls for help. Incident response is supported by administrative, fire prevention and chief officer staff. The 45 field personnel work a 24 hour shift of duty followed by a 48 hour off period. The personnel and operational resources are housed in four fire stations spread throughout the district.

Each fire station is staffed with a CO who is the supervisor for that station house and the assigned company

of personnel. The CO supervises a company of two to five personnel based on a span of control concept. Span of control is defined as the number of personnel that one officer can effectively manage depending on the situation. As supervisor, the CO in EFR is responsible for evaluating each of their assigned personnel on an annual basis. The immediate supervisor to the company officer holds the rank of Battalion Chief (BC) and evaluates the company officer annually. BC's are the only management working the 24 hour on shift 48 hour off and are responsible for all of the stations and field operations personnel on one shift.

"The purpose of a performance appraisal is to evaluate an employee's performance of their job duties, tasks, attitude, contributions, etc. (Estero Fire Rescue, 2005, p. Section 211). Supervisors are expected to follow the department employee evaluation process and use a standard department appraisal form. Supervisors in all areas have an additional form for assessing those with supervisory responsibility. Administrative, management, prevention and support personnel as well as operational field personnel all utilize the same appraisal factors, forms and process.

There is question within EFR among employees about the meaning of the performance appraisal. Training for supervisors about the appraisal process and documentation

was almost non-existent until 2007 when one class was held regarding EPE. This class focused on EPE in general and did not touch on the specific EPE used within EFR. Since that class a number of newly promoted CO's with little to no training have been tasked with performing the EPE's.

There is belief among department members that the process contains ambiguity of associated standards and scoring criteria. Issues and inconsistencies have resulted in rising complaints from supervisors and subordinates alike. Concerns that have been brought forth from employees at both subordinate and supervisory levels include; (a) generalized rating parameters that do not clearly relate to published standards, (b) rating criteria irrelevant to job descriptions and tasks, (c) biasness in supervisory judgment leading to favoritism or negative prejudice in the scoring and comments, (d) inconsistent or total lack of reward or consequence.

CO and staff meetings as well as employee comments have consistently critiqued the employee performance appraisal form and process in a negative light. The deficiencies in the process of employee appraisals have given rise to widespread perception among the employees that the evaluations have no real meaning and are not

effective at developing the employee or raising productivity.

The EFR Executive Management Team requires EPE's as part of an overall program to provide quality service in a responsible manner to the citizen's and visitors of Estero. In response to the department wide concerns about the appraisal process EFR Management made the decision to redevelop the employee performance appraisal system. A committee was established to facilitate this rebuilding. This committee will be referred to as the Employee Performance Appraisal Committee, (EPAC).

The preliminary goals of performance appraisals set by the EPAC committee in 2009 are (a) organizational and professional employee development, (b) provide for merit increase, (c) communicate employee goals for the following year, (d) provide accountability for goal achievement, and be utilized as part of promotional decisions. The EPAC discussed the desire to not have appraisals be punitive but understood that corrective action may be necessary and suggested the use of performance improvement plans, guidance and coaching. The EPAC also understands that it may not always be possible to reward positive performance with merit increases. The EPAC is open to considering what other agencies are using and how EPE's are utilized to

increase effectiveness and meaning to the employee. EFR desires to create and EPE process that is both meaningful to the employee and serves as effective leadership enabling high productivity.

The National Fire Academy (NFA) provides training that develops fire officers to perform executive level skills. One portion of that training is dedicated to executive leadership (EL) and teaches the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) strategies for effective leadership. FEMA (2005) describes an effective leader as one who is both transactional and transformational.

Transactional leadership consists of capable management and reward equity. Capable management describes resource, information and training provision as well giving clear direction and supporting employees (FEMA, 2005, pp. p.SM 3-9). Reward equity recognizes a job well done, shares appreciation and provides rewards that people value (FEMA, 2005, pp. SM 3-9).

Higher levels of leadership termed transformational are those behaviors and characteristics that can create great change or lead to higher performance levels within organizations. FEMA (2005) describes transformational leadership as behaviors like communications, credibility, caring, and creative leadership and characteristics like

confident, follower-centered, visionary, and principled leadership(p.SM 3-10-13).

Transformational leadership is characteristic of leaders who exhibit concern for employees through listening attentively for feelings and content. Leaders need to communicate clearly and treat others with respect regardless of differences. Leaders create opportunity for others to succeed and help them learn from mistakes as well as design situations for success. EPE's and assessments provide a tool that when used effectively by effective leaders, can provide for both transactional and transformational processes.

Literature Review

In terms of economic impact to the employee being evaluated Rudman (2003) indicates that pay for performance by economic means can be successful; if it is equitable and meets the needs of the individual. Rudman shares the following concept with Armstrong and Applebaum (2003); pay is a short term motivator but satisfying work and appreciation for a job well done go farther in motivating workers in this era. Pay for performance is the basic essence of why we work at all. Money is received for work performed to provide for personal and societal needs as well as benefits which cover our basic security needs.

According to Armstrong and Applebaum pay as a motivator is tied to the economic structure of the nation and other factors. Rudman agrees in part, that performance pay motivates employees; only when the reward is enough to satisfy individual monetary needs at that time. Rudman adds that pay as a motivator of performance is subject to constantly changing variables. Performance pay is complicated in that it requires a strong foundation within the appraisal system to be effective.

Armstrong and Applebaum (2003) advocate that employee appraisal should be an ongoing process of communication that leaves the employees without surprise about performance when tied to pay. Rudman (2003) agrees and identifies key features that are necessary for effective pay for performance: a) focus on long term performance as part of an overall system to develop and motivate employees, b) involve employees in the creative process and support training of pay for performance plans, c) design the performance pay plan criteria to the organization's goals that are crucial to business effectiveness (p. 181).

Jenson, McMullen & Stark (2007) discuss necessary components to performance pay to be: (a) clear goals, consistent recurrent conversations and management effort, (b) measurable performance standards capable of

differentiating performance between employees who perform at different levels, (c) differing levels of reward that are commensurate with the performance achievement, (d) the ability to fund worthwhile increases for high level performance. Armstrong & Appelbaum (2003), (Jensen et al.(2007), and Rudman (2003) are all in agreement that any employee performance should be relative to organizational goals that are clearly communicated and measurable. In the absence of the specific criteria outlined above, the aforementioned authors demonstrate doubt that performance pay programs can be successful.

Rudman believes appraisal for pay should focus on areas where performance meets or exceeds standards and less on areas where an employee needs improvement. In contrast DelPo (2005) points out that the primary objective of employee performance appraisal should be employee development; when money is tied to performance the focus shifts to that end and away from the journey of improvement. Rudman does find that a balanced approach between standards based performance and development lead to the greatest satisfaction among employees.

Rudman (2003) reports that managers often fail to deal effectively with performance issues and may inaccurately appraise workers in a positive light. This can lead to

inadequacies in paying for high performance that employees are witness to which de-motivates others performance.

Detractors to performance pay discussed by Rudman indicate pay is relative to individual and organizational circumstances. Performance rating systems which are inconsistent or misused destroy confidence and can hamper employee motivation. Pay systems that reward areas other than performance can detract from the motivation of employees who would be high performers; when others are recognized simply for showing up for a number of years.

Miller (2008) reports that in spite of many organizations best intentions to the contrary, pay for performance based systems have shown to increase the bias in gender and race. Miller communicates how women and non-white men who have the same supervisors, and whose performance is similar in rating, over time receive less pay than their white-men coworkers.

Rudman suggests that there can be disconnect between what an organization communicates as expected behavior and that which is rated in an appraisal. "Performance pay schemes focus on individual performance, even though the organization is emphasizing team work and cooperation (Rudman, 2003, p. 181)". Armstrong and Applebaum (2003) discuss the significance of the effort that an organization

and its leaders put towards performance evaluation is relative to the employee's perception of their value as employees. Messages about organizational values are communicated throughout the appraisal process and with pay incentives regardless of the spoken word. Armstrong and Applebaum cite several corporate examples such as CEO Bob Rodin, SAS Institute in North Carolina, and Southwest Airlines, where monetary incentive and pay for performance was replaced by direct supervisor recognition and improved workplace environments as a greater motivator on long term employee performance (p.95-96). Individual pay incentives were reported by Armstrong and Applebaum to increase individual competition at the expense of shared organizational goals.

What part should employee performance appraisal play in determining whether an employee is chosen for promotion during promotional processes? A study by (Baugher, Varanelli, and Weisbord, n.d.) found that compared to content-based promotional process the performance based system was rated more positive; the only negatives are that performance based systems are harder to understand and far less efficient. Attitudes of all constituents, senior management support and organizational culture were cited by Baugher, et al., to have a significant effect on the use of

performance as a promotional determinant. Murphy and Marguillies argue that the manner in which a performance appraisal system is carried out is vital to the effectiveness of employee development and the accuracy of reporting the employee's performance. Okafor (2005) report in the Nigerian public universities, promotion is the greater focus of performance appraisal; although not by design. Okafor finds that promotion plays a role but only as a factor within a host of other considerations.

"Providing a realistic assessment of an employee's readiness for promotion" (Murphy and Marguillies, 2004, p. 1) is one goal of performance appraisals. Murphy and Marguilles add that promotional capability can be judged on the basis of current and past observation of employee's conduct, competence and demonstrated ability to develop. Francis (2007) discusses how performance appraisals are a tool to identify employee strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement. According to Francis performance appraisal can be used to develop employee's and find the right fit within the company; adding that personnel decisions, including the decision to promote, can be driven by the appraisal when used appropriately.

Francis, Murphy and Marguillies are in agreement that employee performance evaluations can be useful tools when

making promotional decisions. Performance evaluation based promotions are valid only when the processes are carefully crafted to be job relevant fair processes; carried out regularly by supervisors who are trained to utilize the systems appropriately, and the limitations of the processes are considered.

In contrast the *Santa Clara California Performance Appraisal Agreement*, section V, number five states, "The County shall not require a worker to provide a copy of performance appraisal/s for the purposes of lateral transfers or promotions. The County shall not consider performance appraisals for the purposes of lateral transfers or promotions" (County of Santa Clara & Service Employee's International Union Local 521, 2007). *The Santa Clara County Performance Appraisal Agreement* provides no direct explanation for this rule. The Santa Clara County agreement does provide insight into the purpose of performance evaluations as being for "periodic review of employee performance and constructive feedback to enhance the development...of the employee and to contribute to providing quality services (County of Santa Clara & Service Employee's International Union Local 521, 2007, p. 1 Section II).

What role do corrective actions play in employee performance appraisal? Slayton (2004) reports that the United States Department of Interior performance appraisal program indicates the use of corrective and disciplinary actions as being appropriate for performance that is below par. Hargrove (2003) agrees in part with Slayton on the need for performance improvement; using corrective actions only when the measures create opportunity and are not intended to create harm to the employee. Slayton adds that in most situations utilizing counseling and employee performance improvement plans with scheduled follow-up is most advantageous. Hargrove's ideas include teaching leaders to successfully coach employees through conversation, questioning, reflection, shared understanding and meaningful feedback.

Hargrove describes the steps necessary for coaching performance as: (a) uproot peoples ideas of their own performance and create vulnerability, (b) assess all the feedback available about the person, (c) identify patterns and characteristics that define their behavior, (d) create a new context of behavior, and (e) requiring practice to reset the new abilities. Hargrove promotes transformational coaching as key to improving performance and denounces the use of forms. Slayton advocates the importance of

supervisors being able to distinguish between performance problems that result from conduct or unwillingness, versus those in which the employee cannot do. Hargrove champions transformation by reinventing organizations to create a coaching environment. Hargrove further advocates the use of 360 degree feedback that will, "rip the blinders off so people see themselves as others see them (p.231)". Hargrove denounces the use of feedback forms.

What role do disciplinary actions play in employee performance appraisal? According to Slayton (2004), discipline is most appropriate for those situations in which an employee is unwilling to perform; it can also be useful when repeated attempts at correcting fail to improve performance. The US Department of Interior requires that substantial proof and a preponderance of evidence must be in place prior to utilizing discipline relative to performance appraisals (Slayton, 2004, p. 25). Slayton advocates the use of performance appraisal as necessary during staffing decreases, in determining rights to retention of employees. Slayton also advocates the use of performance appraisal in decisions regarding demotion, suspension and termination for poor performance.

In contrast County of Santa Clara & Service Employee's International Union Local 521 (2007) prohibits the use of

any and all discipline arising from employee performance appraisal in the following excerpts:

The performance appraisal is intended to be a positive tool for worker development. Restricting the use to worker development will assist in promoting a non-threatening process and to encourage cooperation between the appraiser and the worker. (p.1, section II). The annual performance appraisal will not be used in the County disciplinary process. (p.2, section VII)

Performance appraisal in Nigerian Universities was studied by (Okafor, 2005), and sites the purpose of performance appraisal to include only one disciplinary criteria; that of dismissal.

Procedures

The research method for this study is descriptive. Two questionnaires were developed using the web company Survey Monkey located at www.surveymonkey.com. One questionnaire was distributed to EFR FF's and CO's (see Appendix A). A second questionnaire was prepared for distribution to other Lee County Fire and EMS departments. This questionnaire was later adapted to distribute to Fire and EMS organizations outside of EFR and Lee County (see Appendix B).

During development of the questionnaires, additional questions were added based on information gained during the

literature review. Armstrong & Appelbaum (2003), Rudman (2003), and Jensen, et al. (2007) all indicate that economic reward and other personnel actions should have criteria that is clearly communicated; nothing should be unexpected when doling out performance appraisals. This additional information led to the need to differentiate between written criteria and that which is not clearly documented.

Limitations were met when attempting to distribute the questionnaires to fire and EMS departments in Lee County, Florida. The first challenge was access to the appropriate department heads, such as human resource managers and fire chiefs, that would be the most apt to have the knowledge necessary to provide research data. This was accomplished at EFR by the assistance of the Fire Chief. An email letter requesting participation, including the link to the appropriate Survey Monkey questionnaire, was drafted and sent to the EFR Fire Chief. The EFR Fire Chief forwarded the request letter to the Lee County Chiefs Association.

The original intent of the study was to compare the EFR EPE's to other departments within Lee County, Florida, the same county that EFR is located. This would include all fire and EMS departments, not limiting the scope to any specific organizations. The response to the questionnaire

sent to Lee County Fire and EMS agencies was poor. Twenty-two organizations were included in this mailing distribution. A response from only one organization was received. This represented a return of five percent. Secondary follow up was requested and the dates for closure of the questionnaire were extended. No further responses were received. This questionnaire was then adapted for distribution to organizations outside of EFR and Lee County Florida.

The goal of limiting the original research questions to Lee County had to be slightly altered to reflect the new scope of fire and EMS agencies outside of the local area. In an effort to be inclusive of all participants, the one participant to the original Lee County questionnaire would then be added to the results of the adapted questionnaire. This was accomplished via the manual entry section on the Survey Monkey website.

In order to maintain the integrity of the research and seek data from non-specific organizations a request for study participation was made to the National Society of Executive Fire Officers, (NSEFO) for distribution to all NSEFO members. The NSEFO currently has 684 members. Limitations to using this society include the possibility that multiple participants from a single organization could

have participated. The NSEFO response to the Survey Monkey questionnaire was 81; which equates to a rate of return for this questionnaire as slightly lower than 11 percent.

Written policy from EFR is readily available for review by the author of this research but prohibited from copy due to department rules and regulations. EFR policy was perused for documents that pertained specific criteria on how FF and CO EPE were to be used to provide reward, non-punitive correction, punitive discipline, or promotional decision-making. No specific written documents were located. EFR has policy on corrective and disciplinary action as well as awards but none of those policies reflect how to use them in relation to the EPE.

The lack of written data created another limitation to the research; the inability to compare the written documents of other departments to those of EFR. Due to the lack of written policy within EFR, the documents received from outside agencies will not be considered in the research. The few documents received will be given to the EFR EPAC for review during the process of developing a new EPE system or to improve the current EPE process.

The lack of written data necessitated the use of personal communication with the top decision-makers at EFR to determine, if at all, how EFR used FF and CO EPE in

decision making relative to the research. The personal communication would enable the comparison of how the EPE may be used relative to the research in a non-written manner.

Questions for the personal communication with EFR chief officers and human resources were similar to the questions about how other departments utilized employee performance evaluation. The questions were the same as those in Appendix B, except that they were directed to EFR instead of other agencies. The content of the questions were maintained, the questions were adapted to fit the specific audience. The focus of the personal communications was to confirm the lack of written documents and determine the unwritten use of EPE's within EFR. EFR job descriptions determined what EFR personnel had overall responsibility and or authority for decision-making in regards to economic impact, non-monetary reward, corrective action, disciplinary action and or promotion as a result of EPE's (Estero Fire Rescue, 2005, p. Section 1100).

The Human Resource Manager, Fire Chief and Operations Chief met the criteria for overall decision-making in these circumstances. Another limitation to the research was the inability to arrange for personal communication with the Operations Chief. The communications then included the EFR

Fire Chief Vanderbrook and the Human Resources Manager Conway. These interviews took place on January 6, 2010 at Estero Fire Rescue Administrative offices and Fire Station three. The interview was conducted by the author of this research paper.

Similarities existed in each questionnaire, although slight differences occurred based on the expected participants. One questionnaire was sent to EFR FF's and CO's with the intent to answer the following research question; Do EFR FF's and CO's think that an EPE system which clearly defines reward and consequence will increase the effectiveness of the EPE process? (See Appendix A) This questionnaire was unique as compared with the questionnaire given to outside agencies and the similar questions asked during the personal communications. The questions in this FF and CO research tool were designed to compare the current performance evaluation process to a hypothetical new process that has been proposed by the EPAC working to improve the current employee evaluation process.

Results

Do the EFR Firefighters and Company Officers think that an EPE system which clearly defines reward and consequence will increase the effectiveness of the performance evaluation process? Appendix A, part I of the

questionnaire to EFR FF's and CO's asked about the current EPE system in relation to the research criteria of reward, corrective action, discipline, and promotion. Appendix A, part II asked similar questions about a hypothetical newly created EPE system.

The current EFR EPE does not provide reward. Only 20 percent of EFR FF's and CO's think that the current EFR EPE system is effective at improving performance or meaningful to the employee by providing reward for ratings that are above EFR expectations. Accordingly 80 percent do not think the current system is effective in providing reward. The addition of reward to the current EPE may help. Forty percent do not think the addition of reward to the current system will change anything about the effectiveness and value to the employee. On the other hand 60 percent do think that the current EPE system, if modified to provide reward, will improve performance and be more meaningful to the employee. The current EPE could be modified to provide reward, however Appendix A question 10 indicates that FF's and CO's do not support the content and process of the current system.

In Appendix A, question 3 suggestions given by the EFR FF's and CO's for non-monetary reward as a result of above standard ratings on the EPE include: (a) letters of

commendation to the file, (b) award ribbons, (c) award pins. One EFR respondent commented, "This is a union issue and should not be visited in this type of forum" (see Appendix A, question 3, line 2). Another thought "the risk of being terminated" was reward enough (Appendix A, question 2 line 6).

In contrast 60 percent think that the current EPE process could be more effective and meaningful to the employee if monetary reward were given for ratings above expectations. Forty percent did not share this view and think that monetary reward would not increase employee performance or add meaning to the current EPE. Similar results were achieved when the employees were asked about monetary reward for a newly created EPE system. Half of the EFR FF's and CO's agreed monetary reward would raise effectiveness and meaning, while half did not.

If EFR created a new EPE system and financial gain was rewarded as a percentage based on the total ratings; 33 percent of the EFR FF's and CO's think that this reward would make a difference, while 67 percent do not. That same result was given for monetary reward given based on ratings that are above average or exceed standards. Sixty-seven percent of the EFR employees think that money is a short

term motivator with the minority believing money to be a long term motivator.

Criteria for promotional decision-making resulted in larger gaps in percentages in both the current and a newly created EPE system. Eighty percent of EFR FF's and CO's think that the current system would be more meaningful to the employee and improve performance if criteria were established that would affect promotional decisions. Twenty percent did not think this would make a difference in the current system. The percentages were only slightly different when considering a newly created EPE system. Eight-three believed it would make a positive difference while 17 percent did not.

Non punitive corrective actions such as performance improvement plans (PIP), coaching, counseling, remediation and training received very similar ratings as the promotional criteria in employee perception of improving both the current and a newly created EPE process. Eight percent thought that criteria for non-punitive corrective action would improve the current EPE while 20 percent did not. Similarly 83 percent thought that adding criteria for non-punitive corrective action to a newly created EPE process would improve the meaning and performance while 17 percent did not.

Sixty percent of the EFR FF's and CO's do not think that the current EPE system is effective and meaningful by providing punitive discipline for ratings below fire rescue expectations. In comparison 40 percent do think the current system is effective and provides punitive discipline for EPE ratings below fire rescue expectations. When asked if the current EPE process would be more effective and meaningful if the EPE included criteria for giving punitive action such as: (a) written reprimand, (b) suspension and (c) termination for ratings below expectations; 70 percent indicated no. Thirty percent thought punitive action criteria added to the current EPE would be more meaningful and effective.

In contrast 67 percent thought a newly created EPE could be more meaningful to the employee and effective in improving performance, if the EPE included criteria that spelled out disciplinary action for (a) below average ratings, (b) needs improvement, or (c) does not meet standards. Thirty-three percent of the FF's and CO's did not agree that a new EPE which included disciplinary criteria would be better.

In summary EFR FF's and CO's are divided in whether the current or a newly created EPE system that includes criteria for reward and consequence will improve the

meaning and effectiveness of the EPE. Comments from the FF's and CO's indicate that issues of subjectivity, poor training, lack of incentive and support, supervisor bias and favoritism, form content, and the difficult process of the current system all identify the issues affecting employee perception, acceptance, and meaning (see Appendix A). There is strong indication that the current EPE system does not provide specific criteria for any of these research areas. There is question as to whether the current system can be altered to provide this criterion. The use of EPE for promotional decision-making as well as non-punitive corrective action has the greatest buy in from the FF's and CO's. Half of the FF and CO respondents indicated that a 360 degree type evaluation should be considered. One added that the 360 could be used in part for promotion, but not at all for monetary or discipline (see Appendix A, newly created section, question 10). Even disciplinary action for poor performance was advocated to some level as helpful to enhance the meaning and effectiveness of the EPE system. Reward, both non-monetary and monetary as a result of ratings on the EPE is only slightly favored by the FF's and CO's.

How do firefighter (FF) and company officer (CO) EPE's in other fire and EMS Departments compare to those of EFR

in terms of reward, both economic and non-economic impact to the employee being evaluated? Only 16 percent of agencies outside EFR have written policy regarding the specific use of the EPE to provide reward of a non-monetary nature to their employees. That leaves 84 percent of the organizations not having any written criteria defining what type of reward or when reward should be given based on EPE ratings. In comparison EFR also does not have any written criteria that specify rewards or how ratings on EPE should be used to reward the employee (L. Conway, S. Vanderbrook, personal communication, January 9, 2010).

Outside agency participants added comments regarding the unwritten use of reward as a result of EPE's (see Appendix B, question 2). Of the participating respondents 16 percent indicated that their organization has written criteria outlining non-monetary reward in response to EPE's. Eighty-four of the respondent organizations did not have any written criteria outlining how non-monetary reward as a result of EPE was given to employee. As listed by line number in the aforementioned appendix section, a sample of these comments include line 15 "Delegated additional responsibilities, praised, identified as a top quarterly performer, provided opportunities to participate in training programs"; line 19 "Until the economic downturn,

merit raise as based on the evaluation. Now they are only given time off (in hours depending on score)"; line 32 "They are considered in promotional processes as well"; line 34 "Letters in personal files". The remaining respondents indicate that they did not offer any reward for EPE's. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents indicate that non-monetary reward is not offered based on the results of the EPE's. In comparison, not only does EFR not have written policy there is also a lack of unwritten use of non-monetary reward for EPE results. The comments provided on the EPE or while the supervisor is reviewing the EPE with the employee are the may be perceived as rewarding by some employees (S. Vanderbrook, personal communication, January 6, 2010). Similarly one respondent from an agency outside EFR indicated that acknowledgement for achievement is both mentioned and noted during review of an EPE with employees (see Appendix B, question 2 line 32). Vanderbrook advised that the general overall performance of an employee is considered when making decisions for special assignments, training and other special events; but the EPE is not used to make this determination. Vanderbrook admits that these decisions are based on subjectivity.

In terms of monetary reward, 28 percent of the outside agency respondents indicate that monetary reward is provided and written criteria are available. Comparatively the EFR Fire Chief and the Human Resource Manager both indicate that EFR does not provide monetary reward written or non-written for FF and CO performance evaluations; all merit raises and other monetary rewards are based on the current terms of the labor contract (L. Conway, S. Vanderbrook, personal communication, January 6, 2010).

Appendix B question 4 contains comments from agencies outside EFR about the unwritten use of EPE for monetary reward. The comments indicate some confusion about the question. Twenty-one comments in question 4, Appendix B regarding unwritten criteria indicate that no-monetary reward was given. Seventy-two percent of respondents indicate that monetary reward is given however written parameters based on the EPE are lacking or non-existence. A few of these comments indicate that some agencies reward only when money is available, as a result of union labor contractual pay scales, or that monetary reward is given based on contractual language regardless of performance.

EFR provides similar monetary reward based on contractual language, not as a result of employee performance ratings. EFR provides step pay based on union

contract terms, without reference to performance, although parameters such as education are considered (S. Vanderbrook, personal communication, January 6, 2009). Step pay is a pay system utilized in many fire departments based on the union labor contract. This type of pay system often provides raises to all employees of a certain job classification. The pay raise is based on terms negotiated by contract between the department management and the labor force. Based on the contract terms, the raise may or may not accompany specific parameters or performance criteria. A common criterion for stepping is time on the job, whereby each covered employee advances the same predetermined amount of pay raise each year.

One agency respondent from outside EFR commented

"I see I got ahead of myself. Our performance ratings are tied to a merit increase. However, being new to the organization, I have discovered that there is no formal training our guidelines related to what justifies the ratings. Needless to say, this causes a "halo-effect" in that everyone is excellent or above average and allows the maximum merit." (Appendix B question 4, line 14)

Other respondents indicate: "The monetary rewards are distributed at the discretion of the fire chief based upon overall rating" (see Appendix B, question 4, line 29), and "Up to a maximum of \$750, supervisors are afforded the latitude to grant individual bonuses for performance beyond the normally expected levels" (see Appendix B, question 4, line 31).

How do firefighter and company officer EPE's in other Fire and EMS Departments compare with those of EFR in determining whether an employee is chosen for promotion during promotional processes? Fourteen percent of the respondents indicate that there is some written policy on how EPE's are used in promotional decision-making. Thirty five respondents indicate that although there are no written parameters regarding the use of EPE's in promotional decision-making, the EPE is used to facilitate the decision to promote. EFR does not generally have any written parameters that outline specifically how the FF and CO EPE are to be used in promotion other than the most recent promotional process for engineer. "The Fire Chief will have the ability to promote any candidate in the top five of the process who are considered to be eligible. The candidate's personnel file may be referred to and taken

into consideration during this phase of the process (L. Conway, personal communication, June 16, 2009)."

The non-written use of EPE for promotional decisions is utilized in varying levels. Respondent comments indicate that the EPE is reviewed during promotion but not weighted, only used as a tie-breaker, and at the discretion of the fire chief (see Appendix B, question 10). EFR does not have written criteria governing how the EPE is used in promotion. The EFR Fire Chief advised that EPE's are used to determine which candidate will be awarded the promotion when all other promotional process scoring result in a tie, as well as to chose from the top candidates in recent promotional processes (S. Vanderbrook, personal communication, January 6, 2010). Outside agency respondents indicate the EPE is used to: (a) choose from the top candidates, (b) indicate growth and development of employees, (c) identify strengths and weakness, (c) weighted scoring in promotional processes and (d) to assess the use of leave and other various performance when choosing candidates for promotion (see Appendix B, question 10). EFR reviews promotional candidate EPE's for use of unscheduled paid personal leave and or tardiness when deciding what candidate to promote (S. Vanderbrook, personal communication, January 6 2009). Peer review, a

form of EPE is one aspect of an EPE's use in promotional decision-making (see Appendix B, question 10).

One respondent admitted that although the EPE is used during promotional decisions; the EPE's can be unreliable in realistic evaluation of an employee (see Appendix B question 33. This respondent relays the reason for this is due to the CO not wanting to risk damaging in-house relationships. Another respondent advised, "The employees are told that when we make promotions we will consider their prior work performance (performance evaluations) along with the other items weighed in the total promotion process (see Appendix B, question 10, line 30)." Although 14 percent of respondents identify written criteria for inclusion of EPE in promotional decision-making, 89 percent of respondents do not have written criteria that outline how this should occur (see Appendix B, question 9).

How do firefighter and company officer EPE's in other fire and EMS Departments compare with those of EFR in defining corrective or disciplinary action procedures for poor performance ratings? Thirty-six respondents indicate that their agencies have written policy relative to the use of non-punitive corrective action as a result of EPE. In comparison 64 percent of the respondents do not have written criteria describing how non-punitive corrective

should be handled according to EPE's. Thirty percent of respondents express the presence of written criteria for punitive disciplinary measures as a result of ratings from EPE's. In contrast 70 percent have no-written criteria outlining the use of punitive discipline as a result of ratings on EPE's.

Appendix B question 6 reveals that non-written non-punitive actions are taken relative to an EPE. The manner in which this is done varies. Appendix B question 6 indicates that coaching, counseling and employee development can be given based on ratings and areas that need improvement which are identified in an EPE. In contrast others indicate that these corrective actions are taken in a timelier manner, immediately when an issue arises as opposed to waiting for an EPE to occur. One respondent advised that corrective actions relative to an EPE are "determined on a case-by-case basis" (see Appendix B, question 6, line 11). Another response stated, corrective action is "up to the discretion of the company officer doing the evaluation" (see Appendix B, question 6, line 10). Respondent comments in Appendix B, question 6 indicate actions such as, face to face, coaching, counseling, and improvement plans are used primarily at the discretion of the supervisors. Others indicate that

immediate corrective actions are taken when performance problems occur and do not wait for the EPE to occur. One respondent organization uses formal counseling for EPE ratings that are below satisfactory and coaching for all areas of the EPE that are satisfactory but less than excellent. An informal corrective action given by some organizations consists of face to face communications and review of the EPE with the employee but no other actions. A few respondents indicated that non-punitive corrective should occur but does not or that nothing is done relative to correct performance issues.

Several responses defer to the written department or municipality policy on disciplinary action as a means to handle corrective issues that are identified with an EPE. EFR has a written disciplinary process but does not specifically reference it's use for substandard or below expected ratings on an EPE. Some respondents who do not have written criteria specific to corrective action as a result of EPE do utilize various forms of corrective action and or punitive discipline. Some respondents indicate that policies not specifically related to the EPE outline in writing how corrective actions are handled.

In summary comparison of EFR's EPE system to that of outside fire and EMS agencies it is found that many

agencies are lacking specific criteria outlining how the ratings on an EPE are to be used to provide reward and consequences. EFR is similar to many agencies in that the organization has generic policies on discipline, corrective action and promotion, but few of these connect directly to the EPE. A few agencies outside of EFR have written criteria that define the use of EPE in rewarding the employee, providing correction or discipline for performance ratings and in deciding who to promote.

Some of the outside agencies provide reward in a monetary manner while others provide reward with non-monetary techniques. EFR also provides reward to some degree according to management but not on the basis of EPE ratings. EFR does not provide any monetary reward for performance and like many agencies all monetary concerns are based on labor union contract agreements. EFR utilizes the EPE by review in some promotional events just as some outside agencies do. The number of fire and EMS agencies in this study that utilize EPE's by defining to the employees ahead of time specific criteria for issuance of reward and consequence for EPE ratings are few. Most organizations in this study, including EFR, use general policy and unwritten, unclear methods for determining reward or consequence action as a result of EPE ratings.

Discussion

Literature review influenced a change in EPE from that of primarily one annual written document, to a process that involves clearly written procedures and criteria ahead of time. Emphasis is placed on avoiding surprise to the employee. Of the fire and EMS agencies who responded to this research, clearly a majority do not have specific criterion which outlines how ratings from an EPE should be used. EFR also does not have specific written criterion that define the use of reward and consequence for ratings on EPE's. Could this open these organizations up to lawsuits and grievances when untoward action is taken against an employee? Some departments, including EFR do have general policies that outline corrective actions; discipline, promotion and even award. General policies can be used for performance issues; however this research indicates policy lacking clear defined use relative to the EPE is poor practice.

EFR SOG includes documents on awards, disciplinary rules, disciplinary matrix, code of conduct, and promotional processes cover some form of reward, discipline, corrective action and process for promotion. These documents do not specifically relate in any detail how specific ratings on an EPE should be handled by the

supervisor or the organization. The detail is left to the discretion of the supervisor or decision-maker and therefore subjective. Comments from agencies outside EFR can be found in Appendix B and indicate that some organizations use the same general policy for day to day activities as they do for the annual EPE process. EFR differs from the few organizations in this study who do have specific criteria; describing how the EPE should reward or correct employee performance.

Could it be that the standard expectations in fire and EMS departments has increased to the point that performance over and above is deemed the norm? This is especially true in a job where the employees are tasked with protecting the lives of others on a daily basis. How does one define the job of a firefighter and medic? Without adequate performance standards judging performance of an employee becomes more of a comparison to other employees instead of against a standard set of practices or department goals. Appendix A question 10, lines 1 and 3 mentions the vagueness of the form being a problem as well as the need for more feedback regarding specific performance detail. Jensen et al. (2004), as well as Murphy and Marguillies (2004) indicate the manner in which performance appraisal is handled, the specificity of performance standards that

are measureable are both important to the success and acceptance of EPE systems.

Using department goals is one method of appraisal that can meet measurable criteria. Interdepartmental objectives such as hydrant flow testing, company inspections, company evolutions, area and equipment familiarity, station and vehicle readiness or cleanliness, report accuracy and detail are a few examples. The use of national fire and EMS standards are other ways to accomplish this. EFR is one of several departments that utilize the same criteria and performance standards for emergency field workers as that which is used to evaluate office workers and management.

Operational field employees such as FF and CO often work as a team, and in most aspects of the job functioning effectively in this manner is crucial. EPE's for these types of workers often evaluate the individual independent of the team. Rudman (2003) mentions the disconnect that occurs in many organizations due to the expectation of team work and the appraisal of individual performance.

Several issues affect the perception of FF's and CO's toward the use and meaning of performance evaluations. These issues can damage trust of the process as well. Perception tainted by poor practices invalidates the EPE to the employee. Outside relationships can affect the way a

supervisor rates an employee when standards are not clear and measureable. The supervisor who hangs with the employee often sees past the annoyances and faults that are highly noticed in others. This can be reflected on the EPE. The use of subjectivity to reward employee performance may be tainted with other issues such as differences among employees, certain characteristics or personalities, off-site relationships and other biases. Subjectivity can get organizations and supervisors in a lot of hot water when a legal charge is made. Subjectivity among other issues can lead to poor perception of the EPE process. This perception can seriously detract from the effectiveness of the EPE to improve performance.

The EFR Fire Chief admitted to providing reward when making choices for special training, projects and events by subjective means, not through review of EPE's (personal communication, January 6, 2010). Other agencies indicated for the most part that non-monetary reward based on performance was not given at all (see Appendix B, comments question 2). Research interpretation is that specific criteria for accomplishing this without bias between supervisors is lacking in the majority of agencies studied. It can also be said from the research, based on the subjectivity and the ease in which evaluations can be

biased, that some EPE cannot be trusted to reflect performance. Research has found that measurable standards should be used when positive or negative economic impact. Appendix A question 2 line 4 speaks to the subjective nature of the EFR EPE and indicates it should not be used to provide gain or discipline. The author of this study thinks that anything less than well defined standards will open the organization to destroy the morale, as well as strong performers who are incorrectly appraised.

Another issue is the lack of guidance to supervisors as a contributing factor to employee perception (see Appendix A, current EPE, question 10 line 2). Rudman (2003) discusses the negative effect to an employee that misuse of an EPE by supervisor can cause. This research explains how supervisors who are not willing, not well trained or scrutinized in all aspects of the EPE process can account for employee discontentment. Often supervisors just go through the motions and pencil whip the process (see Appendix A current question 10, lines 3, 5). It can be interpreted that the lack of supervisory training is a real contributing factor to the lack of meaning.

A third issue affecting perception is partly caused by the performance factors and grading scales that are utilized. Research finds that when factors and ratings are

vague much is left up to the interpretation of the evaluator. Appendix A current evaluation section question 10 employee comments: a) "too personal... if a supervisor likes/dislikes you then your eval. could be affected.", b) "Appraisal form is too vague and a lot is left up to interpretation." The author understands that when an employee gets below expectations ratings or exceeds expectations when not deserved this detracts from employee support of the EPE. It can be inferred from this information that psychologically the employee checks out of the process. This means the the EPE loses its effectiveness. When defined standards that are job specific are lacking he author construes that the deterioration of meaning to the EPE is not only possible but probable.

In deciphering the whole of comments from research respondents, it is found that one of the important aspects of EPE's is buy-in from both the rater and the employee being rated. Any issues of content, scoring, and process, as well as determinants for decision-making that are not clear place the EPE as suspect. Appendix D, question 10 identifies common problems such as vagueness, personal likes and dislikes, and much left to interpretation. Hidden meaning finds that difficulty often ensues as a result of a supervisor trying to provide feedback. Inference proposes

that conflict may be avoided at all cost by the supervisor for fear of consequences or damaging relationships. In the author's experience, employees can take feedback personally or the union can get involved. Appendix A, current section, question 10 line 5 indicates supervisors can find it easier to give a middle of the road rating.

Armstrong and Applebaum (2003) point out that appraisal of performance should be an ongoing system providing regular feedback. Appendix A question 10 indicates some agreement by employees that the use of EPE for feedback is important to the employee, but only when the process is streamlined, fair and provides incentive. Appendix B question 6 indicates the use of corrective action and coaching as being performed as soon as the poor performance occurs.

Hargrove (2003) and Slayton (2004) highly advocate coaching as a result of EPE's. Hargrove advocates the deletion of EPE forms and focusing of coaching as a communication process not a written process. Appendix A shows agreement to Hargrove through the comments regarding the length of the process when someone exceeds performance and on the contrary the need for supervisors to take the EPE serious. Appendix A also references the use of feedback and corrective action as being important to the employee.

It can be argued that feedback and corrective action could be rewarding to the future well being of an employee. Inference is made that it is often easier to coach an employee when something is wrong since at that level the supervisor is not required to perform much documentation. It can be deduced that employees and supervisors alike do not want documentation. Although research findings and author experience indicate that written documents are important. Technology may be available to streamline all of these documentation processes and should be researched. The author believes that along with coaching conversations, streamlining the process with technology based documentation and analysis of performance can diminish the paperwork when preparing evaluations. The author finds by experience that even coaching conversations need documentation in some manner. Appendix A, current section, question 10 line 1 refers to a computer based program as being helpful to documentation. Research infers that a streamlined process which provides supervisors easy methods to document, correct or otherwise remediate performance can help lessen the load with annual evaluations; but evaluators must be well trained and parameters well defined.

Comments from Appendix B indicate that supervisors can take action based on EPE ratings, although not well defined. Research indicates that general policies on corrective action provide direction to supervisors, but do not define use with EPE ratings. One can deduce that supervisors have the latitude to coach, counsel, or provide development plans and PIP's as a result of an evaluation or any performance criteria. EFR does indicate in the Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) on performance evaluations and in the instructions for the evaluation process; a plan for improvement can be developed (Estero Fire Rescue, 2005). No detail is provided regarding how to develop this plan relative to ratings from an EPE. The author construes that general policy is not clearly defined well enough to be used with EPE results. From this research it can be deduced that EFR and other agencies need to create defined criteria in policy pertaining to corrective action for EPE ratings.

Understanding is that reward needs to be based on true performance. Non-monetary reward is lacking in the majority of organizations or is done in a non-discriminate manner. It is understood from comments in Appendix B that reference to non-monetary reward is limited in the scope of what can be rewarded. Even the EFR FF's and CO's have a hard time choosing reward independent of money. The author believes

that developing employees to higher potentials can be rewarding. Perhaps a system of EPE adds that that emphasizes non-monetary reward or development and that simplifies the documentation for such; can enhance the use of reward for performance that goes beyond expectations.

Interpretation of the research indicates that monetary reward is provided by few fire and EMS agencies. Many of these agencies employees are part of labor unions, which historically maintain labor contracts based on similar pay for time on the job, regardless of actual employee performance. Rudman (2003) advocates pay for performance but insists that certain criteria need to be used for success. (DelPo, 2005) disagrees and finds that monetary reward is only a short term motivator, if at all and advocates employee development instead. EFR FF's and CO's also indicated by a margin of 34 percent their belief that money is a short term motivator (see Appendix A). (Miller, 2008) finds that monetary reward for promotion is often subject to discrimination based on gender and race.

Research finds that monetary reward can depend on whether organizations have enough money to provide a significant incentive. Rudman (2003), Armstrong and Applebaum (2003) discuss pay as a motivator to performance being temporary and depends on the immediate needs of the

employee. Appendix B, question 2, line 16 indicates that monetary rewards for EPE ratings were given but with economic downturn this has been stopped. The author understands that with the budget crisis upon EFR at this time, the chance of monetary reward being effective is questionable. EFR is similar to many of the outside respondent agencies in that although there is reward provided to employees most is not given as a result of the EPE. Whatever the reward given, correctly administered reward, can increase employee development and improve the ability for advancement.

Francis (2007), Murphy and Marguiles (2004) indicate that the use of EPE's for promotional decision-making is dependant on the effectiveness of the process and development of criteria that is also clearly communicated. Research infers that the agencies which do not have documented criteria that spells out what EPE ratings deserve a specific reward or consequence are doing a disservice to the employees, and opening the process up to biasness or favoritism when making promotional decisions. It is understood that often the personnel making the decision to promote do not have a clear day to day view of candidate performance. The author infers that these decision-makers may be making promotions based in part on

bias toward difference and favoring special relationships. Appendix B, question 4 indicates that the fire chief reviews the EPE and if he/she concurs forwards the review. The author questions the validity of this act based on the job of a fire chief as compared to a company officer or other evaluator. Lower ranking supervisors generally observe the performance of the immediate subordinate more often than higher ranking personnel. Being indiscriminate or biased may not be the intent and the decision-maker may not even realize that this is occurring; however without specific criteria being outlined no one can know for sure. Interestingly the FF's and CO's in Appendix A indicated mistrust with the use of EPE for discipline or monetary matters yet they support the use of EPE for promotional decisions.

In summary research finds that a well prepared foundation and follow-up is important to the EPE process. Thoughtful creation of content, process and how an EPE will be used is important to improving performance. Clearly defined use of EPE ratings to provide monetary or other reward, promotional decision-making or punitive discipline and non-punitive corrective action must be well understood ahead of time. It can be deduced that these criterion be written to insure understanding. Additionally training

should be provided to all stakeholders to enhance understanding. Oversight must be used to lesson inconsistencies among personnel. Technology and computer based documentation may lesson the difficulty in paperwork processing. With a strong foundation, reward and consequence which create an encouraging environment; only causing harm to the employee as a last resort, can influence the effectiveness and meaning of an EPE. Reward and consequence can be effective methods to improve EPE systems.

Recommendations

Clearly certain organizational parameters must be in place before any EPE process can be successful. The following recommendations to EFR are made and depend on an over haul of the current system. These recommendations should be used both by management and the EPAC to recreate a new EPE system. More research is suggested to rewrite appropriate performance factors for the EPE process. Suggestion is also made to formulate separate EPE based on the job tasks of FF's and CO's. Research supports the following recommendations:

1. EPE performance criteria should be measurable and relative to department goals, local and national

standards, as well as interdepartmental objectives.

2. Criteria for each performance level should be clear and quantified with little left to interpretation.
3. Criteria for EPE use in promotional decisions, reward and consequence should be clearly spelled out and communicated ahead of time.
4. Criteria for each performance level should be clear and quantified with little left to interpretation.

The previous four steps will improve the understanding of expectations within the organization and minimize bias.

5. Focus on employee development and constructive feedback should drive the process followed by non-punitive corrective actions.
6. Punitive discipline should be used as a last resort and its use clearly defined.
7. The use of performance development and improvement plans as well as other non-punitive corrective action criteria should be used consistently and fairly.

The previous three steps along with the steps one thru four can over time repair the damaged trust in the process.

Another positive effect on the organization is that employees will see that employees are held accountable for poor performance, but are valued and developed before discipline.

8. Reward both monetary and non-monetary should be utilized for exceptional performance.
9. Creative uses of non-monetary reward such as public recognition, award pins, commendation letters, time-off, special event, training and conference attendance; even promotional decisions should be determined based on the actual EPE results and not the cognitive interpretation of staff.

The previous two steps along with the top seven will work to motivate higher levels of performance from employees.

10. All personnel involved must understand the expectations ahead of time and what circumstances will lead to specific ratings.
11. Buy-in from the employees and the supervisors regarding the use and fairness of the process is necessary. Incorporate all stakeholders in the creation process.

The previous two steps and all others will enhance support of employees in the EPE process.

12. Consider the incorporation of 360 degree performance appraisal as one aspect of the overall EPE system.

13. Groups expected to operate as teams should be evaluated as such.

The previous two steps will provide a variety of feedback relative to the job and provide opportunity for higher development.

14. Supervisors should be trained regularly on the process including not only the EPE, but how to provide reward and non-punitive discipline in a positive and effective manner.

15. Employees should be trained on how to handle constructive feedback and not take it personally.

16. The union should be limited to action in punitive discipline only.

17. Oversight review of all performance evaluations should be made to insure that supervisors are treating similar performance in a similar manner across the department.

These four steps will improve the ability of the evaluators to more accurately assess performance and be less fearful of consequences. Performance will be more evenly assessed across the department based on similar performances.

18. Regular feedback should be used in place of the annual process.
19. Documentation process should be streamlined and used frequently to document employee performance, including both positive and negative aspects.
20. Technology should be used regularly to streamline the process and lessen the annual load on the supervisor.
21. Improve computer based technology for employee performance evaluation data entry and analysis of data.

The previous four steps will be advantageous to correcting performance when issues arise; removing the element of surprise from any annual or other scheduled EPE's. These steps will also improve and standardize the documentation of performance across the organization and should improve the ability of the supervisor to stay on top of actions given to an employee.

For anyone wishing to recreate this study in their own organizations the following suggestions are made:

1. Begin the process by fully researching your organization immediately after the literature review to drive the needed information.

2. Do not wait for responses, if you are not getting the participation needed; move on immediately to avoid delay.

Comparative analysis of EFR CO and FF performance evaluations related to reward, promotional, corrective action, and discipline indicate that EFR is similar to other fire departments. The manner in which the EPE is used to provide reward, promotion, correction and discipline is comparative; the EPE systems lack certain criteria to be effective and meaningful to the employee. The EPE is also comparative in that certain parameters such as reward, correction and promotion are either provided subjectively or not at all. Comparatively with EFR many organizations can and need to improve the EPE systems.

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Appendix A - EFR FF and Company Officer Questionnaire

Response Summary

Total Started Survey: 10
Total Completed Survey: 6 (60%)

Current Estero Fire Rescue Employee Performance Appraisal Process Questions

1. Considering the current EFR Employee Performance Appraisal process, do you think the appraisal is meaningful for employees and improves employee performance effectively by rewarding ratings that are above or well above the fire rescue expectations?			
	<i>answered question</i>		10
	<i>skipped question</i>		0
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		20.0%	2
No		80.0%	8
2. Do you think that the current performance appraisal process at EFR would be more meaningful to the employee and effective at improving performance, if rewards were provided when ratings are above or well above the fire rescue expectations?			
	<i>answered question</i>		10
	<i>skipped question</i>		0
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		60.0%	6
No		40.0%	4

3. Do you think the current EFR employee performance appraisal process would be more meaningful to the employee and effective at improving employee performance if it included criteria that would give monetary rewards for performance that is above fire rescue expectations?			
	<i>answered question</i>		10
	<i>skipped question</i>		0
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		60.0%	6
No		40.0%	4
4. Considering the current EFR Employee Appraisal process, do you think that the employee performance appraisal is meaningful to the employee and improves employee performance by providing effective corrective action like performance improvement plans, coaching, training and counseling when a rating below or well below fire rescue expectations is achieved?			
	<i>answered question</i>		10
	<i>skipped question</i>		0
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		30.0%	3
No		70.0%	7
5. Do you think that the current performance appraisal process at EFR would be more effective if corrective action such as performance improvement plans, coaching, training and counseling were provided when ratings are below fire rescue expectations?			
	<i>answered question</i>		10

5. Do you think that the current performance appraisal process at EFR would be more effective if corrective action such as performance improvement plans, coaching, training and counseling were provided when ratings are below fire rescue expectations?			
	<i>skipped question</i>		0
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		90.0%	9
No		10.0%	1
6. Considering the current EFR Employee Performance Appraisal Process, do you think the current appraisal is used effectively when making promotional decisions?			
	<i>answered question</i>		10
	<i>skipped question</i>		0
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		30.0%	3
No		70.0%	7
7. Do you think that the current EFR appraisal process would be more meaningful to the employee and effective at improving performance if it included criteria that would affect promotional decisions?			
	<i>answered question</i>		10
	<i>skipped question</i>		0

7. Do you think that the current EFR appraisal process would be more meaningful to the employee and effective at improving performance if it included criteria that would affect promotional decisions?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		80.0%	8
No		20.0%	2
8. Considering the current EFR Employee Performance Appraisal process, do you think the appraisal is meaningful for employees and improves employee performance effectively by providing for discipline, from written reprimands to suspension or termination, for ratings that are below fire rescue expectations?			
	<i>answered question</i>		10
	<i>skipped question</i>		0
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		40.0%	4
No		60.0%	6
9. Do you think the current EFR employee appraisal would be more meaningful to the employees and effectively improve employee performance if it included criteria for disciplinary action from written reprimand to suspension and termination for ratings that are below fire rescue expectations?			
	<i>answered question</i>		10
	<i>skipped question</i>		0
		Response Percent	Response Count

9. Do you think the current EFR employee appraisal would be more meaningful to the employees and effectively improve employee performance if it included criteria for disciplinary action from written reprimand to suspension and termination for ratings that are below fire rescue expectations?			
Yes		30.0%	3
No		70.0%	7
10. Describe the top 3 reasons for you supporting or not-supporting the current EFR Employee Appraisal Process?			
	answered question		5
	skipped question		5
			Response Count
			5
1.	The current form is too vague. The questions are repetitive and do not give a true outlook of the employee being evaluated. We need a computer based appraisal that asks specific questions only once and then prints the completed form in a neat packet that is the same format for everyone involved.		Sun, Oct 18, 2009 7:45 AM
2.	1- too personal... if a supervisor likes/dislikes you then your eval. could be affected 2- Supervisors haven't been properly trained on how to utilize the employee appraisal form 3- Appraisal form is too vague and a lot is left up to interpretation.		Sat, Oct 17, 2009 7:55 AM
3.	Most questions/fields are very similar or repetitive. Because it is general knowledge that no one supports them, there is no incentive to do well. Its basically a formality for most. If EFR revised the evals. and made them to provide good feedback in more SPECIFIC areas of performance, supervisors would take them more seriously, and the employees would follow their lead.		Sat, Oct 17, 2009 7:50 AM
4.	Performance appraisal is not attached to any monetary benefit. Nothing is attached to it as far as performance improvement plan for below standard performance.		Fri, Oct 16, 2009 5:03 PM
5.	very subjective, very broad subjects, not initiating corrective action, and provides to much paperwork for the company officer if giving higher than average score.		Fri, Oct 16, 2009 5:02 PM

Newly created Employee Performance Appraisal Process

1. Do you think a newly created employee performance appraisal process at EFR could be more meaningful to the employee and effective in improving performance, if it included criteria for non-monetary reward of performance that is rated above the average or exceeds standards?			
	<i>answered question</i>		6
	<i>skipped question</i>		4
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		50.0%	3
No		50.0%	3
2. Do you think a newly created employee performance appraisal process at EFR could be more meaningful to the employee and effective in improving performance, if it included criteria for monetary reward of performance that is rated above the average or exceeds standards?			
	<i>answered question</i>		6
	<i>skipped question</i>		4
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		50.0%	3
No		50.0%	3
3. What types of NON-MONETARY rewards do you think would make any employee performance appraisal process more meaningful to employees and effectively improve their performance in the long term?			

3. What types of NON-MONETARY rewards do you think would make any employee performance appraisal process more meaningful to employees and effectively improve their performance in the long term?		
	<i>answered question</i>	6
	<i>skipped question</i>	4
		Response Count
		6
1.	Money	Wed, Nov 11, 2009 7:54 PM
2.	This is a union issue and should not be visited in this type of forum.	Sun, Oct 18, 2009 7:48 AM
3.	Commendation Letter in personnel file with ribbon award	Sat, Oct 17, 2009 8:01 AM
4.	I have NO idea... good thought, but I can't think of WHAT to use. These ARE subjective (whether we admit it or not) so any "gains" or "discipline" will cause them to be much more scrutinized.	Sat, Oct 17, 2009 7:56 AM
5.	The only thing I can think of are recognition pins.	Fri, Oct 16, 2009 5:07 PM
6.	the risk of being terminated	Fri, Oct 16, 2009 5:05 PM
4. Do you think a newly created employee performance appraisal process at EFR could be more meaningful to the employee and effective at improving performance if it included criteria that provided for financial gain percentages based on the total ratings achieved?		
	<i>answered question</i>	6
	<i>skipped question</i>	4
		Response Percent
		Response Count

4. Do you think a newly created employee performance appraisal process at EFR could be more meaningful to the employee and effective at improving performance if it included criteria that provided for financial gain percentages based on the total ratings achieved?			
Yes		33.3%	2
No		66.7%	4
5. Do you think a newly created employee performance appraisal process at EFR could be more meaningful to the employee and effectively improve employee performance if it included criteria that would financially reward employee for ratings that are above the average or exceed standards?			
	<i>answered question</i>		6
	<i>skipped question</i>		4
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		33.3%	2
No		66.7%	4
6. Do you think that monetary rewards are short term or long term motivators to employee performance?			
	<i>answered question</i>		6
	<i>skipped question</i>		4
		Response Percent	Response Count
Short Term		66.7%	4

6. Do you think that monetary rewards are short term or long term motivators to employee performance?			
Long Term		33.3%	2
7. Do you think that a newly created employee performance appraisal system at EFR would be more meaningful to the employee and effective in improving performance, if it included criteria for promotional decision-making based on performance ratings?			
	<i>answered question</i>		6
	<i>skipped question</i>		4
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		83.3%	5
No		16.7%	1
8. Do you think a newly created employee performance evaluation process at EFR could be more meaningful to the employee and effective in improving employee performance, if it included criteria for corrective action such as Performance Improvement Plans that include coaching and training or counseling for ratings that were below average, needs improvement or did not meet standards?			
	<i>answered question</i>		6
	<i>skipped question</i>		4
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		83.3%	5
No		16.7%	1

9. Do you think a newly designed employee performance appraisal process at EFR could be more meaningful and effective at improving employee performance; if it included criteria that spelled out disciplinary action from written reprimands to suspension and termination for below average ratings, needs improvement, or does not meet standards?			
	<i>answered question</i>		6
	<i>skipped question</i>		4
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		66.7%	4
No		33.3%	2
10. Would you support the use of a 360 degree evaluation system that is used strictly as an employee development tool? The 360 degree evaluation provides feedback from those who are your professional peers, other organizational departments, subordinates and superiors to evaluate you on your working characteristics and performance standards. Please answer if you are in support of or not and include other options for employee performance appraisal.			
	<i>answered question</i>		5
	<i>skipped question</i>		5
			Response Count
			5
1.	no	Sun, Oct 18, 2009 7:48 AM	
2.	I think it would be worth looking into.	Sat, Oct 17, 2009 8:01 AM	
3.	not sure, hard to picture this. I think we need to revise the questions more than anything, not reinvent the wheel.	Sat, Oct 17, 2009 7:56 AM	

10. Would you support the use of a 360 degree evaluation system that is used strictly as an employee development tool? The 360 degree evaluation provides feedback from those who are your professional peers, other organizational departments, subordinates and superiors to evaluate you on your working characteristics and performance standards. Please answer if you are in support of or not and include other options for employee performance appraisal.

I don't like discipline or monetary action. These SHOULD be used in promotions, but only as a guide,(and in the event of a tie or close finish) not something set in stone.

- | | | |
|----|----------------|------------------------------|
| 4. | yes | Fri, Oct 16,
2009 5:07 PM |
| 5. | Not supporting | Fri, Oct 16,
2009 5:05 PM |

Appendix B - Outside Organization Questionnaire

Fire and EMS Company Officer and Firefighter/EMT/Paramedic Performance Evaluations

Response Summary

Total Started Survey: 81

Total Completed Survey: 64 (79%)

Page: NON-MONETARY REWARD

1. Does your organization have written policy or guidelines that explains how firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer employee performance evaluations are used in providing non-monetary reward for the employee?			
	<i>answered question</i>		81
	<i>skipped question</i>		0
		Response Percent	Response Count
YES (Please send a copy to survey requester, Thank you)		16.0%	13
NO		84.0%	68

Page: NON-WRITTEN, NON-MONETARY REWARD USES

2. If there is no written policy, but firefighters/EMTs/Paramedics and company officers are still rewarded in a non-monetary manner for ratings received during performance appraisals please comment on how this occurs.		
	<i>answered question</i>	34
	<i>skipped question</i>	47

2. If there is no written policy, but firefighters/EMTs/Paramedics and company officers are still rewarded in a non-monetary manner for ratings received during performance appraisals please comment on how this occurs.		
		Response Count
		34
1.	Letters in personal files	Fri, Dec 11, 2009 8:09 AM
2.	No reward system in place.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 2:20 PM
3.	They are considered in promotional processes as well	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 12:39 PM
4.	None	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 12:19 PM
5.	n/a	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 10:50 AM
6.	They do not receive any non-monetary rewards	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 10:37 AM
7.	Annual evaluations are performed for all employees but there are no rewards for above ratings or penalties for below satisfactory ratings. They are, just a matter of routine.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:52 AM
8.	Our performance ratings are tied to a merit increase. However, being new to the organization, I have discovered that there is no formal training our guidelines related to what justifies the ratings. Needless to say, this causes a "halo-effect" in that everyone is excellent or above average and allows the maximum merit.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:23 AM
9.	We just started a program and came up with the forms. It has not been put into a SOP yet.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:12 AM
10.	no rewards are available except for monetary	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 8:49 AM
11.	There are no non-monetary awards given for performance	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 8:29 AM

2. If there is no written policy, but firefighters/EMTs/Paramedics and company officers are still rewarded in a non-monetary manner for ratings received during performance appraisals please comment on how this occurs.		
12.	we have reviews but there are no rewards or consequences attached they are more an exercise in career planning	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 6:20 AM
13.	All of the above receive annual performance appraisals that determine whether they will receive a merit raise (if money is available), but no non-monetary rewards are given.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 8:39 PM
14.	n/a	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 8:14 PM
15.	no rewards based on performance.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 7:28 PM
16.	Until the economic downturn, merit raise as based on the evaluation. Now they are only given time off (in hours depending on score).	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 6:54 PM
17.	Our City has generic forms that every department uses to do employee evaluations.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 6:52 PM
18.	None	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 5:46 PM
19.	n/a	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 5:03 PM
20.	Delegated additional responsibilities, praised, identified as a top quarterly performer, provided opportunities to participate in training programs.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 4:56 PM
21.	no	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 4:08 PM
22.	Employees are rated in monetary manner	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 4:00 PM
23.	none	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:54 PM
24.	We don't have performance appraisals at this time.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:52 PM

2. If there is no written policy, but firefighters/EMTs/Paramedics and company officers are still rewarded in a non-monetary manner for ratings received during performance appraisals please comment on how this occurs.		
25.	Evaluations are scheduled annually. There are no monetary or non-monetary rewards. These evaluations are to insure performance standards are met.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:51 PM
26.	N/A	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:49 PM
27.	yearly performance appraisal done by supervisor	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:46 PM
28.	Not applicable	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:44 PM
29.	n/a	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:39 PM
30.	N?A	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:39 PM
31.	No rewards are given.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:37 PM
32.	Performance is still rated and sent via channels to the appropriate chief officers, reviewed, addendums attached if there is a discrepancy or additional laurels, then to the Fire Chief who in turns reviews, confers if applicable to the DC of Operations, signs and presents to HR	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:36 PM
33.	No	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:32 PM
34.	No rewards are given relative to performance appraisals	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:32 PM

Page: MONETARY REWARD

3. Does your organization have written policy or guidelines that explains how firefighter/EMT/Paramedic and company officer level employee performance evaluations are used in providing monetary reward for the employee?			
	<i>answered question</i>		74
	<i>skipped question</i>		7
		Response Percent	Response Count
YES (Please send a copy to survey requester, Thank you)		28.4%	21
NO		71.6%	53

Page: NON-WRITTEN MONETARY REWARD

4. If there is no written policy, but firefighters/EMTs/paramedics and company officers are still rewarded in a monetary manner for ratings received during performance appraisals please comment on how this occurs.		
	<i>answered question</i>	31
	<i>skipped question</i>	50
		Response Count
		31

4. If there is no written policy, but firefighters/EMTs/paramedics and company officers are still rewarded in a monetary manner for ratings received during performance appraisals please comment on how this occurs.

1.	Up to a maximum of \$750, supervisors are afforded the latitude to grant individual bonuses for performance beyond the normally expected levels.	Sat, Dec 26, 2009 6:19 PM
2.	Our evals, do not determine any monetary rewards. All pay raises, bonuses, etc. are in our union contract.	Fri, Dec 11, 2009 12:32 AM
3.	The monetary rewards are distributed at the discretion of the fire chief based upon overall rating	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 2:38 PM
4.	None	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 12:19 PM
5.	n/a	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 10:51 AM
6.	We do have performance appraisals, just no SOP or SOG as a guideline	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 10:17 AM
7.	No monetary rewards for performance	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:42 AM
8.	I see I got ahead of myself. Our performance ratings are tied to a merit increase. However, being new to the organization, I have discovered that there is no formal training our guidelines related to what justifies the ratings. Needless to say, this causes a "halo-effect" in that everyone is excellent or above average and allows the maximum merit.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:23 AM
9.	no they get no money.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:12 AM
10.	Monetary awards are automatically given per contract regardless of performance	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 8:30 AM
11.	Monetary raises are contractual, no other way	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 8:22 PM
12.	n/a	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 8:14 PM
13.	No policy, no rewards	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 7:29 PM

4. If there is no written policy, but firefighters/EMTs/paramedics and company officers are still rewarded in a monetary manner for ratings received during performance appraisals please comment on how this occurs.		
14.	Generic policy... Supervisor fills out form is turned into Human Resource Department and they determine per union contract the amount for the step raise or after you max out in your rank there are no more raises.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 6:54 PM
15.	None	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 5:46 PM
16.	n/a	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 5:03 PM
17.	Same as previous	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 4:56 PM
18.	no	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 4:08 PM
19.	During the eval process, but there is no guide as to how to do this.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 4:01 PM
20.	Union contract ties pay increases to time in grade and certification levels: Fire officer 1, etc	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:58 PM
21.	none	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:54 PM
22.	n/a	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:53 PM
23.	Monetary payments are based in contract. Not on appraisals.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:53 PM
24.	Step Plan The employees evaluation is completed on a yearly basis and as long as they receive a sat. eval the move into the next step.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:47 PM
25.	No monetary reward just positive comments on performance appraisal	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:46 PM
26.	n/a	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:40 PM

4. If there is no written policy, but firefighters/EMTs/paramedics and company officers are still rewarded in a monetary manner for ratings received during performance appraisals please comment on how this occurs.		
27.	N/A	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:40 PM
28.	No monetary reward based on ratings is given.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:37 PM
29.	Performance is still rated and sent via channels to the appropriate chief officers, reviewed, addendums attached if there is a discrepancy or additional laurels, then to the Fire Chief who in turns reviews, confers if applicable to the DC of Operations, signs and presents to HR	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:36 PM
30.	They are rewarded by performance only. They are also rewarded only when there has been money allocated for annual performance increases. This year there are no increases due to no money being allocated.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:35 PM
31.	No reward	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:33 PM

Page: NON-PUNITIVE CORRECTIVE ACTION

5. Does your organization have written policy or guidelines that explains how firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level employee performance evaluations are used in providing non-punitive corrective action such as coaching, counseling, remediation, and performance improvement plans?			
<i>answered question</i>			69
<i>skipped question</i>			12
		Response Percent	Response Count
YES (Please send a copy to survey requester, Thank you)		36.2%	25

5. Does your organization have written policy or guidelines that explains how firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level employee performance evaluations are used in providing non-punitive corrective action such as coaching, counseling, remediation, and performance improvement plans?			
NO		63.8%	44

Page: NON-WRITTEN, NON-PUNITVE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS USES

6. If your organization does not have written policy, but still provides non-punitive corrective action, i.e. coaching, remediation, counseling, or performance improvement plans, for firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level performance appraisals please comment on how this is used.		
	<i>answered question</i>	23
	<i>skipped question</i>	58
		Response Count
		23
1.	There are no guidelines however the information is entered on the evaluation form identified as areas in need of improvement and continual personnel development.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 2:40 PM
2.	n/a	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 12:20 PM
3.	Face to Face meeting with the employee	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 10:18 AM
4.	performance evals not used for this specifically. corrective actions are required to be taken timely rather than during annual reviews	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:44 AM
5.	The employee is made aware of their deficiencies and if warranted, we provide a Performance Improvement Plan to guide them in their area of weakness.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:25 AM
6.	We train all of our officers to use action plans to correct action and behavior.	Thu, Dec

6. If your organization does not have written policy, but still provides non-punitive corrective action, i.e. coaching, remediation, counseling, or performance improvement plans, for firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level performance appraisals please comment on how this is used.		
		10, 2009 9:14 AM
7.	MY best description is that employees will receive "coaching" at any point that their performance is less than excellent. The purpose of the coaching for anyone that scores less than excellent, but at least satisfactory is to give them guidance on constantly improving their performance and ultimately the performance of the department as a whole. Those employees who do receive a less than satisfactory score will receive formal counseling and the development of a prescribed performance improvement plan, which they must adhere to with monthly progress reports for six months. Employees who do not show progress during that six month period may receive a reduction in pay, demotion, or termination.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 8:46 PM
8.	Supervisor writes an addendum to the evaluation that the supervisor is supposed to go over with employee, but usually does not happen.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 6:56 PM
9.	The "Coaching" moment is complete when it happens and should only be referenced in the performance appraisal.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 5:48 PM
10.	up to the discretion of the company officer doing the evaluation	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 5:04 PM
11.	Determined on a case-by-case basis.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 4:57 PM
12.	The ff/EMT/paramedic and CO are counseled by the Battalion Chief on areas of concern and a reference may be included in the evaluation narrative.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:56 PM
13.	We have a disciplinary Policy that out lines punitive actions, coaching, counseling and performance.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:54 PM
14.	Evaluations are completed annually and are used to document areas of concern and areas of improvement.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:52 PM
15.	HR and the department prepare a PIP based on an un-sat eval.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:48 PM

6. If your organization does not have written policy, but still provides non-punitive corrective action, i.e. coaching, remediation, counseling, or performance improvement plans, for firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level performance appraisals please comment on how this is used.		
16.	gone over with individuals and stressed how improvement is needed.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:47 PM
17.	We tend to use Performance Improvement Plans to aid in improving performance.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:45 PM
18.	It is used as a counseling opportunity	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:42 PM
19.	not done	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:40 PM
20.	Counseling and coaching is used on an as needed basis dependent on the infraction.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:39 PM
21.	The company officer, or chief officer being evaluated must provide a development plan for that employee or the chief officer to provide key points to develop that employee for the next evaluative period	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:38 PM
22.	The city's personnel policy outlines in sequential order the different degrees of discipline based on the seriousness of the infraction. This policy is followed when administering discipline.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:37 PM
23.	City HR recommends it, but does not have a formal process. They've been debating it for years. FD has to use City processes.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:32 PM

Page: PUNITIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION

7. Does your organization have written policy or guidelines that explains how firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level employee performance evaluations are used in providing punitive disciplinary action i.e. written reprimand, suspension, negative monetary consequence and/or termination?		
	<i>answered question</i>	64

7. Does your organization have written policy or guidelines that explains how firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level employee performance evaluations are used in providing punitive disciplinary action i.e. written reprimand, suspension, negative monetary consequence and/or termination?			
	<i>skipped question</i>		17
		Response Percent	Response Count
YES (Please send a copy to survey requester, Thank you)		29.7%	19
NO		70.3%	45

Page: NON-WRITTEN PUNITIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION USES

8. If your organization has no written policy, but still provides punitive disciplinary action i.e. written reprimand, suspension, termination or other negative monetary consequence for firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level performance evaluations, please comment on how this is used.		
	<i>answered question</i>	21
	<i>skipped question</i>	60
		Response Count
		21
1.	Our organization does not however it is the overall city policy that a person that receives an overall score of needs improvement on an evaluation that she or he will not receive a raise.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 2:42 PM
2.	n/a	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 12:20 PM
3.	Not part of the annual review	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:44 AM
4.	We would never allow for a Performance Appraisal to be used in a punitive manner. An employee should never be caught of-guard or surprised by the evaluation.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:26 AM
5.	again we have nothing in writing, we train our officers to just use memo form to write discipline up.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:15 AM
6.	Corrective action is monitored	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 8:31 AM
7.	Those employees who do receive a less than satisfactory score will receive formal counseling and the development of a prescribed performance improvement plan, which they must adhere to with monthly progress reports for six months. Employees who do not show progress during that six month period may receive a reduction in pay, demotion, or termination.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 8:46 PM
8.	N/A	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 6:56 PM

8. If your organization has no written policy, but still provides punitive disciplinary action i.e. written reprimand, suspension, termination or other negative monetary consequence for firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level performance evaluations, please comment on how this is used.		
9.	Same as coaching, completed at the time of the event, only referenced in the evaluation.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 5:49 PM
10.	no such discipline based on evaluation unless in a probationary status	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 5:05 PM
11.	Any disciplinary actions are reflected in the performance scores and narratives.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:57 PM
12.	Evaluations are only used to assist in documenting subjects and may be used as background information in disciplinary actions.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:54 PM
13.	same as FF	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:49 PM
14.	I will attempt to gather the Department's disciplinary procedures as soon as possible. The organization is undergoing some changes at this time.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:49 PM
15.	just goes in employee's file for future reference in case of further action	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:48 PM
16.	Why would an organization use a performance evaluation in a punitive mode? This is the worst case way to utilize a performance evaluation. If an organization is waiting until a performance evaluation is done to address an employee's bad performance they are way out of line with good practice.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:48 PM
17.	Not Applicable	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:45 PM
18.	case by case basis	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:41 PM
19.	Actions would be in effect prior to an evaluation period and would follow negotiated guidelines.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:40 PM
20.	Supervisors are told that any discipline should be thoroughly documented and this should be reflected in the performance appraisal and the appraisal outcome should be reflective of the severity of the discipline.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:40 PM
21.	Per performance appraisal process, it is not to be used punitively.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:33 PM

Page: PROMOTIONAL DECISIONMAKING

9. Does your organization have written policy or guidelines that explains how firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level employee performance evaluations are used in promotional decision-making?			
	<i>answered question</i>		64
	<i>skipped question</i>		17
		Response Percent	Response Count
YES (Please send a copy to survey requester, Thank you)		14.1%	9
NO		85.9%	55

10. If there is no written policy, but your organization still uses firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level performance appraisals in promotional decisions, please comment on how they are used?		
	<i>answered question</i>	
	<i>skipped question</i>	
		Response Count
		34

10. If there is no written policy, but your organization still uses firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level performance appraisals in promotional decisions, please comment on how they are used?

1.	1. The performance appraisals are reviewed as part of a comprehensive "look" at the prospective candidate. We will do a public records request (if applicable) of outside candidates' personnel files for their performance appraisal records. Tue, Nov 24, 2009 2:15 PM	Fri, Jan 1, 2010 3:36 PM
2.	No presently used in promotional processes.	Sat, Dec 26, 2009 6:21 PM
3.	Past performance is weighed by the Fire Chief in making the final determination, when looking at the top candidates.	Mon, Dec 14, 2009 11:44 AM
4.	Not used	Sun, Dec 13, 2009 7:55 PM
5.	Peer Review System included in promotional process.	Fri, Dec 11, 2009 6:18 PM
6.	Civil Service System run by state	Fri, Dec 11, 2009 8:10 AM
7.	They are not currently being used as part of our process, but we are looking into using them for a large percentage of the process in the future.	Fri, Dec 11, 2009 12:35 AM
8.	Performance appraisals are not currently used for promotional purposes.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 2:22 PM
9.	They are reviewed and considered during promotion processes by the interview panel	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 12:40 PM
10.	n/a	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 12:20 PM
11.	Review of current and past performance appraisals.	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 10:53 AM
12.	The fire chief reviews performance appraisals during the process	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 10:19 AM
13.	Not part of annual review	Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:45 AM

10. If there is no written policy, but your organization still uses firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level performance appraisals in promotional decisions, please comment on how they are used?

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| 14. | We review the entire employee file, including the performance evaluation to not strengths & weaknesses. | Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:27 AM |
| 15. | Past PAs are reviewed for overall performance and areas where improvement in performance is needed. It can be helpful in determining a "tie-breaker" between candidates. | Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:19 AM |
| 16. | we do use all of the written paperwork from the officers that is in each persons file for promotional process. | Thu, Dec 10, 2009 9:16 AM |
| 17. | They are reviewed but only for additional consideration after testing | Thu, Dec 10, 2009 8:32 AM |
| 18. | For deciding on candidates for promotion purposes. | Thu, Dec 10, 2009 5:44 AM |
| 19. | Employees are considered for Promotions only if there have been no disciplinary action on the employee within the previous two years. | Wed, Dec 9, 2009 9:33 PM |
| 20. | While the performance appraisals are reviewed prior to making any promotional recommendations, one person scoring higher than another will not influence the decision. This is based on the fact that there is an element of subjectiveness in the evaluation of performance, even though it is evaluated against the standard of the employee's job description. However, if the promotional candidates previous performance appraisals indicate less than satisfactory performance, they may not be considered for promotion. | Wed, Dec 9, 2009 8:50 PM |
| 21. | The Fire Chief or Assistant Chiefs will pull a person's file and look at it to review sick time used, family sick used and what the addendums may or may not say. | Wed, Dec 9, 2009 6:58 PM |
| 22. | They have been referenced to verify growth, performance, and history. | Wed, Dec 9, 2009 5:50 PM |
| 23. | personnel file taken into account during the evaluation process by the chief officers | Wed, Dec 9, 2009 5:06 PM |
| 24. | Discretion of the Fire Chief. | Wed, Dec 9, 2009 4:00 PM |
| 25. | A review of previous performance evaluation is at the discretion of the Fire Chief. | Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:58 PM |

10. If there is no written policy, but your organization still uses firefighter/EMT/paramedic and company officer level performance appraisals in promotional decisions, please comment on how they are used?		
26.	Evaluations are reviewed when promotional interviews are being done and allows the interviewer to grade the individual overall.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:56 PM
27.	no written policy but they are looked at.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:50 PM
28.	not used	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:49 PM
29.	N/A	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:49 PM
30.	The employees are told that when we make promotions we will consider their prior work performance (performance evaluations) along with the other items weighed in the total promotion process.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:49 PM
31.	Not Applicable	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:45 PM
32.	case by case basis	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:42 PM
33.	Performance appraisals are reviewed during the promotional process, however, there are very few advantages to this as most company officers shy away from truly evaluating an employee, fearful that they will jeopardize their in-station relationships.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:42 PM
34.	FD does not formally use appraisals for promotion.	Wed, Dec 9, 2009 3:33 PM